
THE ULTIMATE DRAGON WARRIORS ZINE

CASKET OF FAYS

ISSUE FIVE



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THE TALLOW MAN

Christian Hagga

Dark, sooty smoke fills the room, accompanied by the rancid smell of burning tallow. The silhouette of a thin hunched figure can be seen in the haze. His malicious smile is briefly glimpsed through the smoke before he vanishes and the screaming of his victims begins...

The Tallow Man is spoken of in hushed whispers by youths sharing ghost stories, and perhaps by old men in the corner of an inn, a tankard of strong ale in their hands and a haunted look in their eyes. Alternatively known as Blacktallow or Dark Brother Wick, the storied Tallow Man has endured for more than a century, made nearly immortal through his dark sorcery and darker appetites.

The Tallow Man was born a mortal man; in some stories a merchant, in others a priest. In any case, it is undisputed that as a man he was neither hardworking nor virtuous, rather being known for avarice and cunning. His one useful talent was making candles from the rendered fat of animals. According to legend, one dark night he was dispatching a freshly trapped wild dog when, in the process of stripping the carcass of hide and fat to render in his brass cauldron, the creature spoke to him. The carcass – which was surely possessed by a demonic entity – instructed him how to carve six glyphs of power into his cauldron; glyphs which would enable him to live forever so long as the cauldron was kept fed. The man followed the dark creature's instructions and then stepped into the cauldron to be engulfed in dark, sooty smoke.

The following night, on a new moon, the Tallow Man stepped from the cauldron and over the next month found six victims to sacrifice to the cauldron's glyphs. He disappeared into the vessel, emerging during a new moon some six years later to once more find suitable victims to sacrifice. The Tallow Man must always follow the same pattern in choosing his victims; first a merchant, then a priest, a person of high standing, a soldier, and finally two siblings. Of course, he is free to attack any unfortunates

who get in his way but they will not necessarily be worthy sacrifices. Performing the necessary rites over the sacrificed body takes several hours, thus he can only dispatch one victim per day.

Should the Tallow Man be unable to satisfy the cauldron's needs before the next new moon, he will become increasingly desperate. He will also be weakened, losing 1 Health Point every night until he either completes his task or, upon losing his final Health Point, fades away into smoke with a tortured wail, to be trapped in a

nightmarish realm for twelve years, until the hungry demonic entities he serves have the strength to send him back to the mortal world. Where he goes when he has slain his requisite number of victims is unknown, but he returns to seek his next lot some six years later.

The Tallow Man avoids face-to-face combat, preferring surprise if not outright murder. That said, he has a number of powers that make him a dangerous foe. He strikes with a long, cursed butcher's knife; wounds he inflicts with it will begin to smoke and burn, causing an additional point of damage per combat round for 1d6 rounds; damage caused by multiple strikes is cumulative.

The villain can breathe a thick, noxious smoke at will. This takes one combat round and will fill a 5-metre radius. The Tallow Man is unaffected by the smoke, however others in the area suffer penalties of -3 for melee attacks, -4 for ranged attacks and -4 to defence as their vision is impaired



and their strength sapped. Further, the smoke allows the Tallow Man to attempt to hide while in front of observers, with a +5 to his Stealth. Should the Tallow Man take on his smoke form (see below) while in the area, he will become invisible to almost all creatures. The smoke will dissipate in 2d6 rounds outdoors (less if there is wind) and will persist for many minutes in a confined space.

Once per day the Tallow Man can turn into living smoke; in this form he can neither be harmed nor restrained by non-magical, physical means. He can do this instantaneously, thus avoiding what might otherwise be a disabling blow. Should the Tallow Man successfully hit in melee while in this form, his victim will suffer a horrible fate: their skin and fat will begin to blister and boil, causing 2d4+1 points of damage. Non-magical armour provides no protection, however a 1d10 armour bypass roll is required against those wearing magical armour. This injury is horribly disfiguring, causing the permanent loss of 1 point of Looks for every 8 points of total damage caused by these attacks. The Tallow Man can move only 3m per round while in smoke form and can maintain the form until a spell expiry roll takes place. Further, while in smoke form, the Tallow Man must flee bright light and will suffer 2d6 points of damage if struck by sunlight.

The evil powers of the cauldron also grant the Tallow Man the spellcasting abilities of a 3rd rank Darkness Elementalist (Darkness, Air and Fire spells only; all are accompanied by smoke and the smell of burning tallow).

The Tallow Man is both cunning and patient; if he realises that a group of adventurers are a threat he is likely to avoid direct combat in favour of surprise attacks on them while unprepared or (preferably) asleep.

The only sure way to permanently defeat the Tallow Man is to destroy his (certainly well-hidden and guarded) cauldron. Any other defeat is only temporary; he will simply rise from the cauldron the following night to recommence his task.

Stories of the Tallow Man tell of one more weakness; anyone who speaks his mortal name in his presence will gain a bonus of 2 to their attack,

defence and damage against him in combat, and will be unaffected by both the smoking wounds caused by his knife and his corrupting touch while in smoke form. If in smoke form, upon hearing his name spoken the Tallow Man will immediately reform and will be unable to transform again for 3 combat rounds. Of course, discovering this information will be far from easy.

Attack 22, knife
(2d6+2,4+smoking wound)
Defence 10
Armour Factor 0
Magical Defence 12
Evasion 7

Stealth 22
Perception 12 (darksight)
Health Points 25
Movement 10m
Rank Equivalent 11th



TAVERN BRAWL

Tony Garcia

Taverns can prove interesting places for any adventure. Anything can happen, including a good brawl! How about a simple table to determine how the brawl started? What's the reason for the beat up beginning? Roll 2d6 below and have fun!

<i>Roll 2d6 and find out that the brawl started because:</i>	
2	some miscreant insulted a barbarian's wife.
3	a dwarf was called a son of a goblin.
4	the beer was flat and warm. Or not, if that's to your taste.
5	an assassin cheated at cards.
6	a hapless knight had a drunk puke over him at dinner.
7	a courtesan was shorted on her pay. She pulled out a dagger and slashed the customer's face.
8	a table of barbarians were presented with a significantly high bill.
9	a drunk piddled on a barbarian's foot.
10	an elemental's roast dinner lacked the requisite sauce.
11	somebody has had their fingers in the till.
12	the tavern's cook took exception to his fare being called slop.

The fight can involve players, or serve as a distraction for some game action. The Game Master can decide the best way to adapt it into their story.

THE GOATS

Tom Clare

Sometime during the day, a herd of shaggy black goats wander over to the party and begin to chew on anything they can reach. They are a nuisance more than anything, and will finally leave if outpaced or shouted at enough. But if they are treated badly they will tell their elfling friends about it and plan revenge.

That night, whether the party is camped or on the move, the goats will return, ridden by invisible, chuckling elves. The beasts will gallop through the party, scattering any campfire and frightening the horses – each horse must roll equal to or under their rank – typically 2nd * – on 1d10 or run off (breaking free of any tethers) and cannot be caught for 1d3 hours. Knights, barbarians, and mystics handling a horse when the goats attack may add their rank to the horse's before making the roll.

While elf-ridden, the goats are like braying shadows. If attacked they will retaliate, but instead of being injured, the PCs will be knocked down or otherwise embarrassed. If the goat rolls a critical (on a 1 or a 2) the PC will find themselves backwards astride a goat that will run off with them for half a mile before rearing up and dumping them in a shallow mire.

The elves will cast various nasty enchantments on the PCs as the goats cause havoc. They have a Magical Attack of 17. These are petty-magics and will not last beyond noon the following day.

Roll 1d6; if another PC has already suffered this curse use the next one.

1. Mushrooms erupt on the PC's face and upper body.
2. When they next set out, all the horses will begin to loudly discuss the PC in very unflattering terms.
3. It begins to rain on the PC... and only on that PC.
4. Any iron or steel that the PC holds erupts into flame, burning them for 1d2 damage each round unless they drop it.
5. Two PCs have their faces swapped.
6. Every word the PC utters becomes a bee.

Once the goats feel they have had their revenge they will gallop off braying with laughter.

* horses that have accompanied a particular PC on several adventures might have a rank of 3rd or even higher.

Elfridden Goats

Attack 14, Horns (Knock down)

Defence 6

Armour Factor 0

Magical Defence 6

Evasion 10

Stealth 13

Perception 7

Health Points 1d6+3

Movement 12m (25m)

Rank Equivalent 1st

HAT OF NAILS

Damian May

Vanatühi, The Empty One, was the idiot god of death and the underworld in south-eastern Krarth in the days of old. He sewed his hat from the fingernails of those sent to his fields. But the Magi desired it greatly and the one who would become the Gift Star sent a champion to fetch it... a champion who never returned.

The Hat of Nails is currently in the possession of Sarvik, the last descendant of Toell the Great, an ancient rival of Vanatühi. Sarvik dwells in an ancient tower in the Drakken Peaks from where he once practiced great sorceries... but in recent years his great swollen form has slumped about that same tower like a ravening beast.

Powers: Donning this hat allows the wearer to cast the spell Invisibility at will. However if the Spell Expiry Roll ever comes up a 2 the wearer will permanently lose 1 point of Intelligence. If the Spell Expiry Roll ever comes up 12 the wearer will permanently gain a point of Strength.

THE RAGGER MEN

Tom Clare

A terrible stench wafts to the party from a nearby copse, and any horses will baulk. If they investigate, they will find a horrible sight: a group of six tattered corpses sitting around a long-extinguished fire. Still more horrible, if anyone makes a loud sound, the corpses will jerk their heads in the sound of the direction and then stagger to their feet to investigate. They are ghastrs, and will attack anyone who invades their camp.

The ragger men will ponderously pursue the party for several hours until they lose interest.

Ghastrs

Attack 15, Gnarled fists (d6,3)

Defence 4

Armour Factor 0

Magical Defence 5

Evasion 2

Stealth 6

Perception 6

Health Points 13 13 14 14 15 13

Movement 8m (16m)

Rank Equivalent 2nd

Clutch: If a ragger man rolls a critical hit, it has fastened its desiccated hands around its opponents neck, strangling them for 1d3+1 damage automatically each round. It is now bound to its victim, however, and a successful strike of at least 6 points aimed at its wrist will sever its hands; the hands will still be attached to the PC, though now unable to continue to injure them.



Sumo

Dominic Bailey

Dragon Warriors has no official rules for grappling or wrestling of any kind so, in order to resolve a bout of sumo with a boisterous Yamawaro (a type of mountain yokai), I dug into my memory for old rules from other systems that I might be happy with. In general, grappling is hard to get right in RPGs. Either the author of the rules doesn't understand it or they understand it too well, giving rise to the situation that grappling is usually abstracted too much or presented in unnecessarily granular detail. Also a sumo bout has very specific rules that don't necessarily apply to wrestling with an opponent under life and death conditions. Sumo rules therefore do not follow the standard combat rules of DW, but instead I settle for the following gross oversimplification of this ancient and complex martial sport:

Each participant calculates a sumo score. This is the average of their Strength, Reflexes and Attack scores. To simulate the fast pace of a sumo bout, an opposed roll under the sumo score is made with the highest success on the die showing an advantage. Two consecutive advantages result in victory, and you can narrate this however you like, such as pushing your opponent directly out of the competition ring or throwing them to the ground in spectacular style. Any roll which is exactly equal to the sumo score is a critical and results in instant and overwhelming victory, unless the opponent also rolls a critical in which case there is a tie...

In my game, Khasan – a shipwrecked Khanate tribesman – was soundly thrashed by the one eyed, hirsute mountain spirit but did earn a point of Ki out of it.

*Rules for Ki will appear in a future issue.

THE SULTAN'S EYE

David M. Donachie

This story is told of Sultan Matul the Magnificent, who was great-grandfather of our blessed Sultan, may the Illuminate watch over him.

It is said that in his younger days, Matul was a great warrior, who often took to the field against the enemies of Opalar, which were many, and which beset the kingdom from every side. He was seldom in his palace, or out of his armour, and it was said that only by the strength of his sword-arm was the Sultanate kept safe.

One day, Matul took to the field against the horse-barbarians. In the midst of battle, an infidel arrow pierced the very eye-slot of his helmet. By the Illuminate's providence, the arrow did not take his life, but the point of it struck out the Sultan's eye, blinding him.

The Sultan gave thanks to God for sparing him, but privately he was dismayed by the loss of his eye. Without it he could not aim a lance, shoot a bow, or wield a sword as he had been used to do; and he feared what it would mean for Opalar if he could not lead its defence in battle.

In those days, it was the case that the Sultan commanded the service of a sorcerer, who was given the position of Wazir. After he had given thanks for his deliverance in the temple, the Sultan went to his Wazir and told him that, although he was, of course, grateful to God for his salvation, nevertheless he was unmanned by the loss of his eye.

"Find for me a way to see again," he instructed the Wazir, "and it will be God's will."

The Wazir was discomfited by the Sultan's words, but nevertheless, he bent his wisdom to fulfilling his commands. After a night spent in contemplation, he called for his horse and his servants and set out into the deep desert, seeking a certain monument buried in the sands. He rode for

three days and three nights, and when he reached the place he had sought, he had his servants place costly offerings of incense and myrrh at the gate of this monument and then retire, to allow him to conduct his rituals.

By arcane means, the Wazir called up a djinn. A whirlwind of crimson smoke rose from the sands, dwarfing the sorcerer, and causing his servants to hide their faces in fear. This djinn was the one known as Al-Alyquaza, the djinn with nine eyes, and the Wazir would have seen these eyes dancing like balls of fire if he had raised his own gaze from the sands.

“Why have you summoned me?” roared the djinn.

The Wazir replied, “Because the Sultan, may the Illuminate watch over him, has been wounded in battle, and has lost his eye.”

At this, the djinn said, “It is given to me by God’s grace to restore the sight of the blind, but only if it is the will of God. Can you be sure that this is what the creator has intended?”

The Wazir was filled with doubt, but nevertheless, he said, “I am sure.”

“So be it!”

The djinn clapped his hands, and vanished, leaving behind a gleaming eye made from the most exquisite polished ruby, which blinked and turned like a real eye, despite being made of stone.

The Wazir took this magic eye back to the Sultan, who placed it in his own socket. At once, his vision was restored, and indeed enhanced, for the eye allowed him to see the hawk in flight or the beat of a bee’s wing.

“God be blessed!” the Sultan exclaimed, “for this eye is better than the one I lost!”

The Sultan returned at once to the battlefield, but instead of victory, he met only with defeat. Though his vision was keener than ever, and the blows of his lance and bow were gifted with unerring accuracy, nevertheless his armies met with loss after loss. His men were exhausted by constant battle,

and the nation, bled dry of men, was on the brink of famine. Nine times he took to the field, and at each battle found himself on the losing side.

When he returned to his palace, the Sultan called for his Wazir a second time and spoke to him with anger.

“Since I placed this eye in my head, my every undertaking has met with disaster! You have cursed me, Wazir, and I demand that you explain this and release me from your curse or I will have you cast from the topmost tower of the palace!”

The Wazir shook in fear, but he answered the Sultan honestly: “My Lord, it is not I who have cursed you, but God himself, for he had ordained that you should be saved but blinded, and you took it upon yourself to undo what he had wrought. You may slay me if you wish, but this will not change a thing.”

At this, the Sultan said, “If it is God’s will that I be blind in one eye, let him pluck it out a second time, for otherwise I shall not believe a word you say.”

The Sultan had the Wazir thrown into his dungeon, intending to oversee his execution the following day, but that very night a thief snuck into the Sultan’s tower, where he was slumbering in his bed, and plucked the magical eye from his head! The Sultan cried out for his guards, but the thief escaped them.

The next day, the Sultan, a shaken man, had the Wazir released, and swore an oath in the temple that he would heed God’s will and retire from battle. As is well known, Sultan Matul proved to be an even finer administrator than he had been a warrior, and under his care, Opalar recovered from its woes and became the strong nation that we know now.

This is why it is said that even the wishes of Sultans are as nothing before the will of God.

The Sultan's Eye

The fate of the Sultan's Eye after its legendary theft is a matter for speculation. Tall tales have it appear in many places, but always end with the eye being stolen once more.



The eye is a polished sphere of ruby crystal with an iris and pupil engraved on one side, rather like a translucent glass eye. At times the engraved eye blinks or seems to move from one side of the sphere to another, though never when being watched.

The eye is a powerful talisman. A Mystic who carries it may subtract 1 from any Psychic Fatigue checks they make. However, its true power is only realised if a character replaces their own eye with it. In this case, they receive the following benefits: +1 Attack, or +2 Attack when using ranged weapons, and all spell expiry rolls are made on 2d10 (expiring on a 20) instead of the normal dice.

Of course, replacing your own eye is easy if you are already missing one. If you are not, putting your own eye and replacing it with the Sultan's eye inflicts a permanent loss of 1 Health Point and 1 Looks, and GMs may require you to pass a fright check if doing it yourself. As a side benefit, you may claim a +2 Looks bonus when attempting to intimidate people.



THE SALT MARSH BEAST

Chris and Stella Meacham

A peasant by the name of Grom is missing. His wife, Adelen, approaches the party to assist in the search for her husband, as his errands should have been completed by now. A good character or a Knight may be inclined to help, if not, a Sergeant of the Guards will later approach the party discreetly. They cannot be seen, publicly, to be overly concerned with finding this peasant, but there is a reward on offer. The man will seem uncomfortable being questioned further, but will put down a gold crown and say there is more to come if Grom is found alive.

A few peasants and the local priest are looking around the village, checking the tavern and Grom's house. Adelen says her husband did a number of small jobs and some fetching, and she remembers the Butcher had a job for him earlier.

The Butcher, Salford, a broad man with a no-nonsense attitude, tells you that he paid Grom a few coppers to pick up a big bag of salt for him which he hasn't delivered. He will admit Grom is well enough liked and is normally trustworthy. Salford will tell you the salt work is roughly 45 minutes walk to the East/West (as appropriate) and, normally, there are a few of "The Regiment" patrolling about there.

The peasants tell you that there are "fings wot come out o' the marsh" and Grom has probably been "etten", the man is shushed by his companions and he goes off grumbling. If you catch up with him, he can tell you about 'orrible, twisted man fings wot eat people". He has seen it with his own eyes, allegedly. The Soldiers put some down a few years ago but it's not talked about much.

A different peasant will inform the party that Grom's probably been "done in" by her Ladyship, if you catch my meaning, Grom's mother was a pretty girl who'd worked and lived in the Manor, till she was suddenly removed, and married shortly after to a fellow peasant.

The Priest can tell you that in very dry summers old stone ruins are exposed out there in the Marsh, no-one goes to the place as it's haunted, obviously!

The Soldiers you meet are tired and bored. They haven't seen anything unusual but will tell you that if he went out on his own he is daft. Grom wouldn't be the first to disappear in the Marsh, nor like to be the last. An eel catcher vanished a couple months ago.

The salt works are rustic, simple, and also deserted at this time. With some searching around/tracking or good luck the party can pick up some of Grom's movements, a few foot prints, where he relieved himself in a bush... the dropped sack of salt, and soon... a bloody drag mark in the soft ground.

If the party chooses to follow this trail out into the distance...

The trail leads out into the salty murky waters of the marsh, where the party can spy a large huddled shape. If they approach, they see a hideous beast, crouched over the half submerged, bloody mess that was once a man. It tears the body's chest apart and rips the heart from the corpse. Again, it plunges its claws into the body, and this time pulls out ropes of steaming entrails.

This is a hideous and rank smelling abomination. The grey and peeling flesh of its thickly muscled legs are stitched to a torso that doesn't seem to match at all, two mismatched, beastly arms end in hideous claws.



This is a ghastly parody of life, clearly created by some dark and twisted Necromancer. Its head has a porcine look with a snout and a drooling jaw filled with razor sharp fangs. This is a Flesh Golem, a necromantic creation, and the monster that haunts the Salt Marsh, and the party must fight it.

The news of Grom's death will be met with sadness from some, and quiet anger from The Lord of the Manor. The Lord may ask the party to delve further into the marsh to root out the evil that dwells there and to find out if this was a targeted attack. This can lead to The Necromancer's Lair.

We will visit The Necromancer's Lair in a future issue of Casket of Fays.

Flesh Golems (Patchwork Men)

Attack 24, Claws (d8,4)

Defence 10

Armour Factor 3

Magical Defence 6

Evasion 4

Stealth 8

Perception 8

Health Points 25

Movement 5m

Rank Equivalent 7th

Filth Burst, the beast spews forth a gush of noxious sludge composed of foul acids and the remnants of its last meals. *Single Target: range 5m, speed 12 vs Eva, D8+5 minus AF = Damage*

Flesh golems are constructed using the body parts of once-living creatures. These have to be collected from different corpses. The bodies used are often of humanoids or monstrous humanoids, but any physical living creature's parts are usable. Latently magical or fey parts are especially sought after. Spells, unguents, stitches, staples or bindings are required to keep the flesh bound together during creation.

When creating a Patchwork Man, there is a chance (GM's discretion) it will hate or turn on its maker.

ONE PAGE PROFESSION - THE TRICKSTER

Wayne Imlach

Not as specialised as an Assassin and more suited to the adventuring life. A thief-come-mercenary who can turn his hand to all sorts of mischief.

Tricksters must have Reflexes of at least 9.

Attack 13

Defence 6

Magical Defence 4

Evasion 5

Stealth 13

Perception 5

Health Points 1d6+7

Climbing – Tricksters use the same climbing rules as an Assassin (Dragon Warriors, p. 46), deducting half their rank from the difficulty of the climb.

Inner Sense, Disguise, Pick Lock & Pilfer – these skills operate in the same fashion as the basic Assassin abilities (Dragon Warriors, p. 43 & 47), but the Trickster may add his rank to Stealth when resolving any disguise or pilfering rolls.

Armour – Tricksters suffer -2 from ATTACK and DEFENCE for wearing chainmail; -4 for plate (the same penalties as an Assassin).

Starting Equipment – lantern, flint-&-tinder, pack, dagger, mail vest (PG, pg. 115), 2-20 florins, crossbow, quiver with 6 quarrels, sword.

Advancement – Tricksters advance in rank the same way as Barbarians.

Skills of the Mighty – Tricksters may choose one Skill of the Mighty from the Knight selection on attaining 8th rank, and each rank thereafter. The Warlock skills Appraise Enemy, Arrow Cutting, Fight Blind and Unarmed Combat, and the upgraded Assassin skills Climb, Disguise, Jump, Pick Lock and Pilfer are also available to the Trickster.

Background – Tricksters use the Mystic background tables when determining past history and origins

A PLENITUDE OF PAZUZUS

David M. Donachie

The Pazuzus are masters of disguise. There are many ways to meet them on the road and not know the danger that awaits you. Roll 1d20, and consult below to see what may befall you.

1. The crimson knight, a haggard questing knight in battered red plate. The plate is real (AF5); the knight is a pazuzu who dyes its stolen armour in its victim's blood.
2. Melitus, an innocent young goatherd, leading his flock. He conceals the bodies of his victims inside goat carcasses then blames wolves for the deaths.
3. Sonia, Mela, and Sara: three unconnected survivors from a caravan slaughtered by an unseen beast. Each privately confides that they fear one of the others is the monster. All three are pazuzu.
4. Mota, a suspicious old goatherd, leading his flock. The pazuzu is one of the goats. It emerges at night.
5. A party of afflicted lazars, led by a mendicant healer, Vitus. The pazuzu is a particularly hideous lazar wrapped head to foot in bandages and wearing a pewter mask upon his face.
6. A wealthy merchant, Godfrey, travels in an ornate coach with a party of retainers. The retainers know their half-seen master is a beast. Victims are put inside the coach and never seen again.
7. Five soldiers: Hugh, Roral, Albert, Geoffry and Pons, flee from the night-time slaughter of their unit. The blood-soaked encampment is nearby. The pazuzu tracks them from the hills near the road, striking after dark.
8. Edwin the mystic is hunted by pazuzu disguised as royal soldiers. He carries a golden lion's paw that the creatures seek. The soldiers have letters declaring Edwin a wanted outlaw.
9. A foam-flecked riderless stallion leads you to a gravely wounded knight, Gilbert, lying by the road. Gilbert, a pazuzu, will attack whoever tends him alone.

10. Hilda the seeress prophesies that one of you will be slain by a beast with a lion's head. Her protector Gregory is a pazuzu who ensures that the prediction comes true.
11. A mighty pazuzu lord, Nagal (30hp), lies sleeping in a tomb, placed under a spell by an ancient sorcerer. Dagobert, a scholar, hires you to recover a fictitious treasure from the tomb, hoping that Nagal will awake.
12. Alstor, a friar, seeks absolution at a shrine at your destination. Alastor is a pazuzu, but the pilgrimage is real. He reveals himself only when danger threatens.
13. Gui of Balham, a merchant, offers you a place in his caravan; then the murders begin. The pazuzu is one of Gui's hired guards, a veiled woman, Yolande.
14. A band of troubadours have a lion in a cage. A man is murdered, his son says he saw the lion do it, but the pazuzu is Guillaume, the fire-breather.
15. An imperious lordling, Hoston, finely dressed and riding a palfrey, makes intolerable demands on the road. The real Hoston is dead, a pazuzu wears his skin.
16. Robelard leads a company of bandits, the Red Feather, who do not suspect that their leader is a pazuzu. Robelard claims one victim from each raid to 'entertain him'.
17. A torch-wielding mob. They are convinced that one of your party is a pazuzu in disguise, and that burning you all is the way to prove it.
18. In the midst of a storm, a woodcutter, Artois, stumbles across you. The old man is sick and grateful for your aid, and also a pazuzu looking for a victim.
19. Two young lovers, Helain and Adam, are eloping on the road, with their angry families in pursuit. Helain is a pazuzu who intended to get Adam alone, and isn't ready to give up yet.
20. Dame Cécile, a knight at arms on a grey mare, seeks a pazuzu who has murdered seven lone travellers along the road. She is full of fire and brimstone. Roll again to see who she hunts.



ARCANA ACADEMIA

Shaun Hately

To create scrolls, a Sorcerer must be of 4th rank. To create potions, they must be of at least sixth rank while some potions require them to have reached 10th rank. And there are magic items that require even greater levels of power. In most Dragon Warriors games, magic items are reasonably rare, but the question arises as to who is manufacturing these items. How many adventuring Sorcerers can take months or years off to create these wonders and still continue adventuring in order to gain the experience points they need to gain the rank they need to have the skills they need to create more items?

This article lays out a set of rules as to how non-adventuring Sorcerers can gain experience through research and study. The archetype of the elderly wizard working away in his library or laboratory is a common one in fantasy.

Of course, this could all just be abstracted and many times that will be the sensible way to handle things – but these rules may still be useful for those occasions when a sorcerer who does normally lead the adventuring life finds themselves with some protracted downtime.

Two things are needed for the sorcerer to gain experience through study and research; the first is time, the second is access to the environment needed for study.

Time is simple enough – for each lunar month (28 days) spent in dedicated study, a sorcerer has a chance of earning experience points according to the table below.

Progress is slow by this method – a Sorcerer who truly wishes to gain power is much better off leaving their library and laboratory, as only the most intelligent sorcerers are ever even likely to become close to powerful by research and study alone – one who was only just intelligent enough to

master the basics of the Art could easily spend decades in study before they even reached 2nd rank.

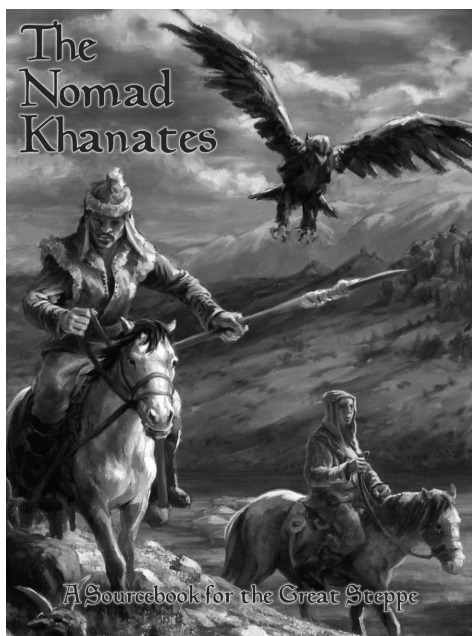
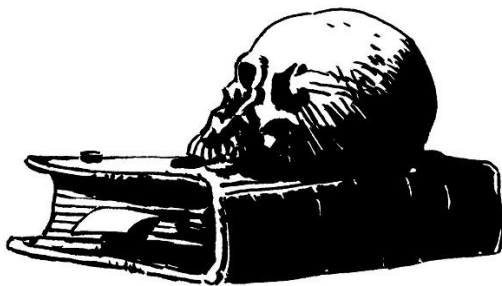
Experience Points Gained Through Study

Intelligence	Chance of Gaining Experience	Experience gained
9-12	1 in 10	1d3 points
13-15	1 in 6	1d4 points
16-18	1 in 4	1d6 points

The studious Sorcerer also needs access to a place where they can study and research – a combination of a laboratory and a library. This takes a considerable amount of money, a number of crowns equal to the number of experience points required for the rank of the Sorcerer. For example, a 6th rank Sorcerer who wishes to gain further experience through study and research will require access to a library and laboratory costing at least 200 crowns. It is no coincidence that this is also what is needed for a Sorcerer's alchemical laboratory (Dragon Warriors, p.30) because these two areas overlap. If these rules are being used, it is suggested that time spent creating scrolls, potions, and other magical devices should be considered study time as well for the purposes of gaining experience.

At the GMs discretion, a sorcerer may not necessarily need to own all of their own laboratory equipment and library – up to half the necessary cost may be offset by regular access to a library owned by another – perhaps a noble patron of scholarly bent or something like the City and Guild Library of Ongus described elsewhere in this issue – it will be up to the GM to decide what value can be placed on access to such a library – the special collection in the cellar of the City and Guild would likely be worth 1000 crowns in its own right for these purposes, but such libraries are few and far between.

These rules could be adapted for other Professions. If this is done, then the table for 'Amount of Experience Gained' should be modified to be based on other statistics besides Intelligence where appropriate. Rather than access to a laboratory and library being required, something more appropriate to those other professions would be suitable.



[The Nomad Khanates](#)

Herein can be found tales of the perilous lands of the Great Steppe, an untamed wild roamed by savage peoples and the vengeful spirits of the earth. Take heed of the lore contained within, wise traveller! Know your death worm from your murder worm! Your sun shaman from your moon shaman! Your Urgan from your Berkha! Tread lightly as you go, sing the songs of the spirits and perhaps, if lucky, you may one day reach the fabled city of Shardis.

ONE PAGE PROFESSION - THE FORESTER

Wayne Imlach

These are the rangers and woodsmen who are common throughout feudal society. Fighting men trained in woodcraft, tracking and moving secretly through the countryside. Foresters must have a Strength of at least 9.

Attack 13

Stealth 14

Defence 6

Perception 6

Magical Defence 4

Health Points 1d6+8

Evasion 4

Track – this operates in the same fashion as the Knight and Barbarian ability (Dragon Warriors, p. 63) but the Forester may add his rank to his Perception score.

Premonition & ESP – these operate in the same fashion as the Mystic abilities (Dragon Warriors, p. 34).

Stealth – the Forester may add his rank to his Stealth score when moving in natural, open terrain (forest, hills, open country etc.).

Armour – the Forester suffers -2 from both Attack and Defence if wearing plate armour (the same penalties as Barbarians and Warlocks).

Starting Equipment – lantern, flint-&-tinder, backpack, bow, quiver containing six arrows, dagger, chain mail armour, 2-20 florins, sword or war axe (treat as a d6, 5 weapon).

Advancement – Foresters advance in rank the same way as Barbarians.

Skills of the Mighty – Foresters may choose one Skill of the Mighty from the Knights selection on attaining 8th rank, and on each rank thereafter.

Background – Foresters use the Mystic background tables when determining past history and origins.

KIDNAPPING FOR FUN AND PROFIT

Damian May

An agent of Earl Montombre will set up a meet at a townhouse in Ongus where they and two associates will meet with the group. They are willing to pay the princely sum of 100 Crowns for the relocation of a sorceress studying at the Guild Hall of the Masterful Apothecaries and Alchemists Fellowship to Cynewulf Magister's private tower on Montombre's estate. They will collect her by dawn the day after tomorrow, from a flour mill some two hours outside Ongus to the east.

The basic requirements are as follows:

1. Kidnap Jana Gulfr from the Guild Hall of the Masterful Apothecaries and Alchemists Fellowship.
2. Take all of her information regarding her project on resurrection.
3. Destroy any other copies of her research in the university and burn down the laboratory.
4. Deliver Jana to a flour mill some hours away.

The Guild Hall of the Masterful Apothecaries and Alchemists Fellowship is located within the city proper (see map of Ongus:

<http://www.libraryofhiabuor.net/ongus.html>). Jana's laboratory is on the second floor, guarded by two burly mercenaries. If the other apothecaries knew the truth of her research and methods, this might create some difficulties.

The flour mill is a stone tower with a wind sail and is located nearly twenty miles from the city.



Difficulties:

Jana will be working with a close colleague and friend, Diana Pollard, her apprentice and occasional lover. Diana will defend Jana against the group. If she is killed, Jana will break her vow to do no harm, and attempt to kill each and every member of the group, not stopping until incapacitated.

Whereas Jana's notes are scattered around the bench-tops of the lab and easily collected, another copy of her compiled research sits within a strongbox hidden beneath the floorboards (STEALTH 20).

Once the adventurers torch the lab, a hue and cry will be raised almost immediately – no one wants to see the city's major source of healing burned to the ground.

Major Complications:

For reasons that the Royal Family keeps close to their chests, they have taken an interest in Jana's research and dispatched people to keep her safe.

Karsten Marks is the leader of a detachment of three King's Agents stationed at the Guild Hall. Marks will be acting as an assistant within the lab having passed himself off as a dogsbody for the Guild some months ago.

Guild Hall

Doors (Lockpick chance 40%, Strength to break down: 16)

1st Floor 4 Guards (Perception 7)

2nd Floor 2 Guards (Perception 8)



Personalities:

Jana Gulfr (6th Rank Sorcerer)

Wilful and headstrong, she's had to be to achieve what she has. If anybody does try to give her an order or force her to do anything against her will, she'll lash out at them with great fury, though she takes her duties as a healer seriously and will try not to do any permanent damage. She does not want to leave but will do anything to save Diana's life, including going with the adventurers as long as Diana can come too.

Diana Pollard (1st Rank Sorcerer)

Jana's best friend and apprentice, she has a keen understanding of alchemy and has developed several new brews to improve the efficacy of potions.

Karsten Marks (5th Rank Assassin; King's Agent)

Posing as a menial at the Guild, Marks has done such a good job at concealing his identity that even Jana doesn't realise that he is there to protect her. He is a skilled operative and wears a +2 maille shirt beneath his smock and wears a Ring of the Burning Halo.

He will attempt to reach and ring a brass bell hanging from the ceiling of the laboratory once the group reveal themselves.

Aricia Lanewell (4th Rank Knight; King's Agent)

A woman of amazonian proportions and dressed in plate and maille, with a huge greatsword that she puts through seemingly insane manoeuvres that would get a less skilled warrior very, very killed. She is stationed down the hall and will respond to the rung bell within two rounds if she hears it.

Darian Delven (4th Rank Hunter; King's Agent)

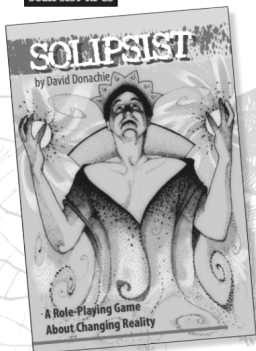
Darian is lithe and handsome and carries a polished bow and is dressed in dark leathers and an Elven Cloak. He is fiercely loyal to Marks.

Even if the companions succeed in the first step of their mission, there are still many things that can go awry: the Guard arrives quicker than expected, the fire is extinguished before it can fully take hold, one or both of the prisoners is injured etc.



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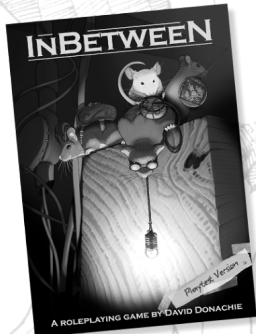
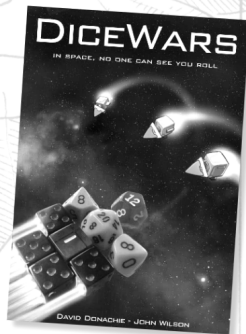
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THE CITY AND GUILD LIBRARY

Shaun Hately

The City and Guild Library (commonly referred to as ‘The C and G’ by its patrons) is a cross-shaped building dominating the prosperous Gracefields ward of the city of Ongus, capital of Albion. Built of (or at least faced in) white marble, it is an impressive sight, and many who see it for the first time assume it is a church or even a cathedral. Plain glass windows are set high on the walls, and entry is by double doors at the south, guarded by two members of the city watch of Ongus. Before approaching these front doors, most visitors will pass three pillories and a gallows just outside the library – under city law the Guild of Sages and Scholars have the right to mete out punishment to those who seriously violate this great library – this power is very rarely exercised but all are warned.

The library is one of the largest in the known world containing thousands of volumes. In theory any free citizen of Ongus is allowed to use the library, and visitors to the city are allowed to do so if a prominent citizen vouches for them. In practice, the librarians find excuses to bar those who they do not consider suitable. A person may be required to bathe before entry (public bathhouses are nearby), and may also be required to sit an examination in Bacchile, Ancient Emphidian, or any modern language to prove their literacy before being allowed entry. Licences to enter can be purchased from the Guild of Sages and Scholars at a price determined on an individual basis for those who wish to be guaranteed entry despite the objections of the resident librarians.

On entering the library, the visitor will find themselves facing the duty librarian at a desk. Other librarians wait on pews at each side of this entry area. The duty librarian will determine whether a person is allowed entry and will assign another librarian to escort them if necessary. Wheeled handcarts can be taken from here deeper into the library. These are necessary as many books are heavy and all on the main floor of the building are chained to their shelves – the carts can serve as desks and

supports for those reading. Most of the library's collection is found on this main floor divided up into a wide range of subject areas. Buckets of sand are dispersed around the floor to deal with the threat of fire, no flame is allowed on this floor, and people must rely on the natural light from the windows above. At the northern end of the building is a large room where scribes toil at copying books. Tables are provided, and parchment and ink is sold within to those who wish to do their own copying (a librarian will unchain a book and bring it here and return it later if it is to be copied) but one of the resident scribes can be hired to copy for a visitor. The chief scribe oversees the operation of this room.

There are two cellars beneath the library. One, which is guarded by a city watchman and a priest (who determines if somebody is allowed to enter), contains books that the church has chosen to restrict from the general public but which bona fide researchers of sound reputation may be allowed to access. Books in this area are stored in locked chests. A cell is provided for a scribe from the scriptorium above to be locked inside when any of these books are to be copied. It is rare for this to be allowed except for requests from high nobility, high church officials, or the leading lights of the city. Out of necessity, the use of lantern light is allowed in this area.

The second cellar is devoted to works associated with the 'magical' arts and similar areas of interest. Magic is tolerated in Ongus by the local church authorities – provided those who study it do not show signs of heresy or worse, the church does not interfere. This smaller library is reputed to be haunted and dangerous to anybody who is not magically inclined and this is enough to keep most visitors from entering. Those who do will find a room that is suffused with a light of unknown origin and shelves of books that are not chained and can be freely accessed by those with the wit and knowledge to study them. A number of desks are made available for this purpose. People in this room must do their own copying. At least one sheet is available in the back of each book for people to leave notes for those who may read it in the future – it is common to use aliases for this purpose and new sheets may be added as needed. Ink and parchment are available to those who need it, paid for by donation into a

sealed money box – those who can afford it are expected to pay more to help those who cannot pay.

The City and Guild Library was built about fifty years ago on the site of a ruined temple and market site dating back hundreds of years to the days when the Selentine Empire occupied Albion. The land (enclosed by a street known as Bloodylease Turn) had an evil reputation that meant few entered it. It was cleared under the direction of Poul Smallfellow, a priestly scholar of great renown who died shortly after the clearing was completed and who many expect to eventually be canonised as a Saint by the church. Some land was left as open land for the recreation of the community, but some was built upon, the City and Guild Library being the largest part of that construction.

Unknown to most people, some subterranean ruins within the area were kept intact and one of these lies under the City and Guild Library between the religious library and the magical one. It can be accessed by a sliding bookcase in the magical library. Inside can be found a pool surrounded by nine stone slabs each with a skeleton atop it – space exists for five more slabs, with carvings on the floor that may represent those who were expected to one day lie there. Nobody is sure who this communal tomb was intended for, but many have theories. One prominent one is this was intended as a tomb for the great King Vallandar and his closest knights – one of the carvings on the floor that waits to be covered by a slab is a crown which lends some credence to the idea that a King was to be buried here, but whether it was Vallandar or some other, it seems that King was never brought here.



THE REDCAP

Paul Partington

'I heard the sound of iron-booted footsteps on the cobbled courtyard before I caught sight of the bizarre creature. It resembled a wizened old goblin, but despite its appearance and the heavy iron boots it wore it was fairly spritely, racing after me at great speed. It had sharp teeth, long clotted hair beneath a filthy red cap and in one of its taloned hands held a wooden staff.'

'Seeking to escape from the enraged creature, I retreated to the castle chapel. Having no weapon myself, I grabbed a wooden cross and held it before me, ready for a desperate battle. But of the creature, there was no sign. Breathing a sigh of relief, I left this cursed ruin in hope of finding safer shelter.'

Description: Redcaps¹ are malevolent fey that inhabit desolate out of the way places. They prefer to live in the ruins of old castles or in the depths of forests. Redcaps delight in causing misery and torment and will venture out of their lairs in search of humans to prey upon.

Redcaps are small humanoids, resembling gnarled goblins or tough old men. They have protruding teeth and tough leathery skin. Beneath their red headwear they have long unkempt hair.

Habitat: The lair of a redcap is a disgusting place. They collect the bones of their victims, which are often strewn about the place. They often keep the blood of their victims in a wooden bucket, into which they can dip their revolting headwear. Indeed, a redcap can only heal its wounds by soaking its hat in the blood of its victims. This, of course, is where their name derives.

¹ The Redcap originally appeared in Dragon Warriors book 4, pg.193, and then in Sleeping Gods, pg. 62.

Society: An individual redcap is not much threat to a party of adventurers, but they will often gang together in groups. Strangely, they have only ever been seen in groups of prime numbers – 3, 5, 7, 11 and so on – although why this is, scholars have not explained. Although extremely sociopathic, redcaps will, given the right incentive, work for evil sorcerers, hags and other supernatural entities.

Combat: If any travellers enter the lair of a redcap, or if the redcap is foraging for victims, it will begin its attack by flinging a rock. Such is the strength in the sinews of the redcap, this counts as a slingshot. The rocks thrown by redcaps are usually coated in a weak poison that causes the victim to fall unconscious if the Strength roll is failed. It will follow this up by attacking with its pikestaff.

Redcaps are so swift that they can run in one combat round and then attack in the next. Redcaps are extremely vulnerable to the sight of a cross; if a cross is presented before them, they are instantly slain, disappearing in a fine red mist.

Elder Redcaps

Redcaps who have survived for many years and slaughtered dozens of victims will become even more sadistic and powerful. The constant wearing of the gore soaked cap renders the recap more formidable and grants it minor magical powers, able to cast Illusion twice a day. Elder redcap are often encountered alone; most likely they have slaughtered their erstwhile companions, or been driven out before they have a chance to do so. Elder redcaps are no longer susceptible to the sight of a cross.



Redcap

Attack 14, staff (d6,3) or rock (d6,3)

Defence 6

Magical Defence 7

Health Points 1d6+5

Rank equivalent: 1st

Armour Factor 1

Movement 10m (20m)

Evasion 3

Stealth 12

Perception 4 (panoptical)

Elder Redcap

Attack 20, staff (d6+1,4) or rock (d6,3)

Defence 13

Armour Factor 2

Magical Defence 10

Evasion 5

Stealth 20

Perception 14 (panoptical)

Health Points 2d6+10

Movement 10m (20m)

Rank equivalent: 6th



CHAUBRETTE: THE TOWN OF ALLARGON

Brock

On the south bank of the Garenne estuary, dominated by a high steep ridge running almost parallel to the river and on which is perched a formidable citadel, is the prosperous town of Allargon. It is the largest town in the County of Allargon, which lies within the Aurillac Region of western Chaubrette; an area noted for its wine. The lord is Count Gui d'Aurillac whose castle, with its unusual twin square keeps, stands on a rise overlooking the north bank of the Garenne estuary.

Originally a fishing town (the river and sea provide a plentiful supply), Allargon has been granted royal charters as Market Town and Port; which make it one of the most important Chaubrettan trading ports south of Quadrille (which lies about 90 miles north along the coast). The waters of the wide and navigable river Garenne teem with boats and ships of all sizes; the majority are fishing vessels, but cogs from Albion, Algandy, and other parts of Chaubrette are a common sight. It isn't unusual to see a Mercanian knarr, or trading vessels from the Coradian Sea, making port here.

The strong stone spur castle which overlooks the town is the home of the Castellan, Sir Gilbert de Trelans, who is also the Constable of the county. With Count Gui's eldest son, Sir Gaubert, away in Outremer, Sir Gilbert has been left with an inadequate garrison and he occasionally hires mercenaries to deal with the county's bandit problem.²

Allargon has strong, stone walls, although these are of dated construction. A notable weakness is the river front, which is unwallled. The embankment is raised (largely to protect from flooding) with about half its length topped

² The last few years of peace have left unemployed men-at-arms with little else to do than make a nuisance of themselves.

by a stout wooden palisade.³ The castle is the key to the town's defence. The oldest part is its 30m-tall square keep and the main entrance is along the ridge and through a new, D-shaped gate tower, although a postern gate in the square tower (known locally as the Tour Lagardère) gives access via a steep path to the town below.

The town boasts three churches, of which the most important is the cathedral of St. Estan. This church has a large square tower, which dominates the town's main square, and has a roof decorated with glazed tiles forming a diamond motif. The walled church compound also houses the palace of Bishop Bernier, a notable theologian and opponent of the Tamorian Creed. Near the western gate, or Porte Des Champs, is the church of St. Genou which is notable for having a tall, slim tower with a two-storey belfry.

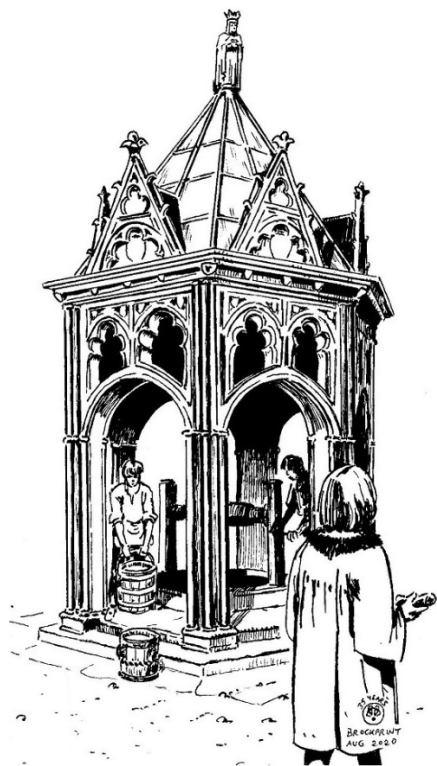
The main square has a covered market (a 'cohue'), the fees from which go to the Count's coffers, and a large covered well topped by a statue to Our Lady of the Waters (Notre-Dame Des Eaux).

A traveller who is not a noble (who would probably find lodgings at the citadel) will find three inns (and several drinking establishments) in the town. These are: La Salle Des Pecheurs (1), La Chope d'Étain (2) and Le Cochon Bien Gras (3) – see plan on page 44.

La Salle Des Pecheurs (The Fishermens' Hall) is right next to the covered market, is cheap and popular with sailors, fishermen and less wealthy travellers. It has a number of rooms which bunk four at a time,⁴ but the innkeeper can arrange a straw pallet in the loft for a few copper Sous (Pennies) or a bench in the common room. Its menu is, perhaps unsurprisingly, mainly fish.

³ There has been a long-running dispute between the Count and the Bishop regarding funding to improve the town's defences. With the area becoming more peaceful over the last few years, this has lost its sense of urgency.

⁴ You need to pay the cost of all four bunks if you want a private room.



La Chope d'Étain (The Tin Tankard) is popular with passing merchants and has average prices, while Le Cochon Bien Gras (The Lardy Pig), run by the stout bald Baudri "Le Boudin", is the best (and most expensive) inn in town and known for serving the best food. Both these inns are built around a courtyard, with stables and storehouses to the rear; access is via an archway in the front of the building.

Allargon has a large shipyard with two slipways. Hugon, the master shipwright, is a capable man who knows his craft. His yard has a reputation for building good ships, although his prices are a little above average. Hugon's yard will also repair

any damage the crew cannot manage themselves, although there is often a queue for his work.

SIR GILBERT DE TRELANS (SIEUR DE TRELANS)

The Constable of Allargon is a very important man, and one that player characters adventuring in the area are likely to have to deal with; either in person or through one of his officers or knights.

Sir Gilbert (more correctly, in Beaulangue, Sieur de Trelans) is a Rank 5 Knight of average physical characteristics, but he is a literate and a capable administrator. He is in his early 30s, 5'10" tall, dark haired, clean-shaven and straight-backed. Usually polite, he is a proud man and conscious of his station. His dealings with the town have not been unduly harsh and he has gained a reputation for being stern but fair.

Characters are only likely to come directly to Sir Gilbert's attention if they do something noteworthy or perform particularly well at a task. He may prove a useful ally for player characters who are able to impress him. Rude, uncouth, and disruptive characters he will regard as riff-raff and have them removed from his sight.



Befitting the rank of Constable, Sir Gilbert is a rich knight and has access to a suit of plate armour, a fine warhorse and all knightly weapons. He owns a +1 magical sword called "Taillefer" (iron-trimmer).

THREE ADVENTURE HOOKS IN ALLARGON

Bandits and brigands plague the County of Allargon and some are bold enough to come close to the town itself. The Constable, Sir Gilbert de Trelans, short of troops and reluctant to spare his own knights, is hiring mercenaries to deal with the problem. Pay is weekly in arrears. A silver Denier is equivalent to an Elleslandic Florin.

Footman (archer or light infantry): 14 Deniers/week

Horseman: 28 Deniers/week

Knight mercenary: 35 Deniers/week

One particularly awkward group of brigands is led by Ganix "le Borgne" ("One-Eye") and they make their lair in an old Selentine fane within the Menard Forest, the eaves of which start some 10 miles east of Allargon. These brigands are unemployed mercenaries, equipped with armour (AF 3), crossbows, swords and shields. Experienced in combat, they are

unlikely to be easily panicked. Ganix also uses a crossbow, wears a padded hauberk (AF 2), but is a Sorcerer. They know all the paths and trails around their lair and have placed barriers and traps along likely avenues of attack.

Smugglers are a problem for any coastal region and Allargon is no exception. Player characters may be tasked with routing out the most obvious culprits and bringing them to justice.

One enterprising band of smugglers uses Hugon's shipyard as the point of entry for their contraband, the stacks of wood and ships being built or under repair make great cover. Hugon is not part of the band, but takes a cut to look the other way.

Problem: Hugon is a skilled and valued master and shipwright. Exposing Hugon and bringing him to justice might be doing the right thing, but it would earn them few friends in town. Sir Gilbert de Trelans might even hint to the player characters before they embark on their investigations that Hugon is "above suspicion". Can the player characters put a stop to the smuggling, or catch some smugglers without implicating the master shipwright?

Selentine ruins can be found among the marshes just a couple of miles east of Allargon. Deep within the swamp, they are hard to get to and have probably been plundered so are of little interest to most. The ruins are actually an old necropolis for a Selentine town which vanished centuries ago; there could be all sorts lying in wait in there...

1. Someone has ventured into the ruins and has disturbed something dangerous. The player characters are tasked with sorting out the problem.
2. The player characters are "befriended" by a local who lets them know about the ruins and the rumours there is treasure to be found. The characters may decide to take a look... The "local" is actually the head of a group of bandits who will lie in wait at the edge of the swamp for the surviving characters to emerge and relieve them of all their valuables.

Remember: all treasure found in the County is the property of the lord and must be declared to the lord or his officers. Do the player characters declare the treasure (and risk losing it) or do they keep it and risk being caught as thieves? (Sir Gilbert de Trelans will usually return most magical items – unless something takes his fancy – and about one third of any coin.)

RANDOM ENCOUNTER: PERFORMING BEAR

A performing bear is attacked in the middle of its act by stray dogs, breaks free, and goes wild. The crowd scatters as the beast runs amok.

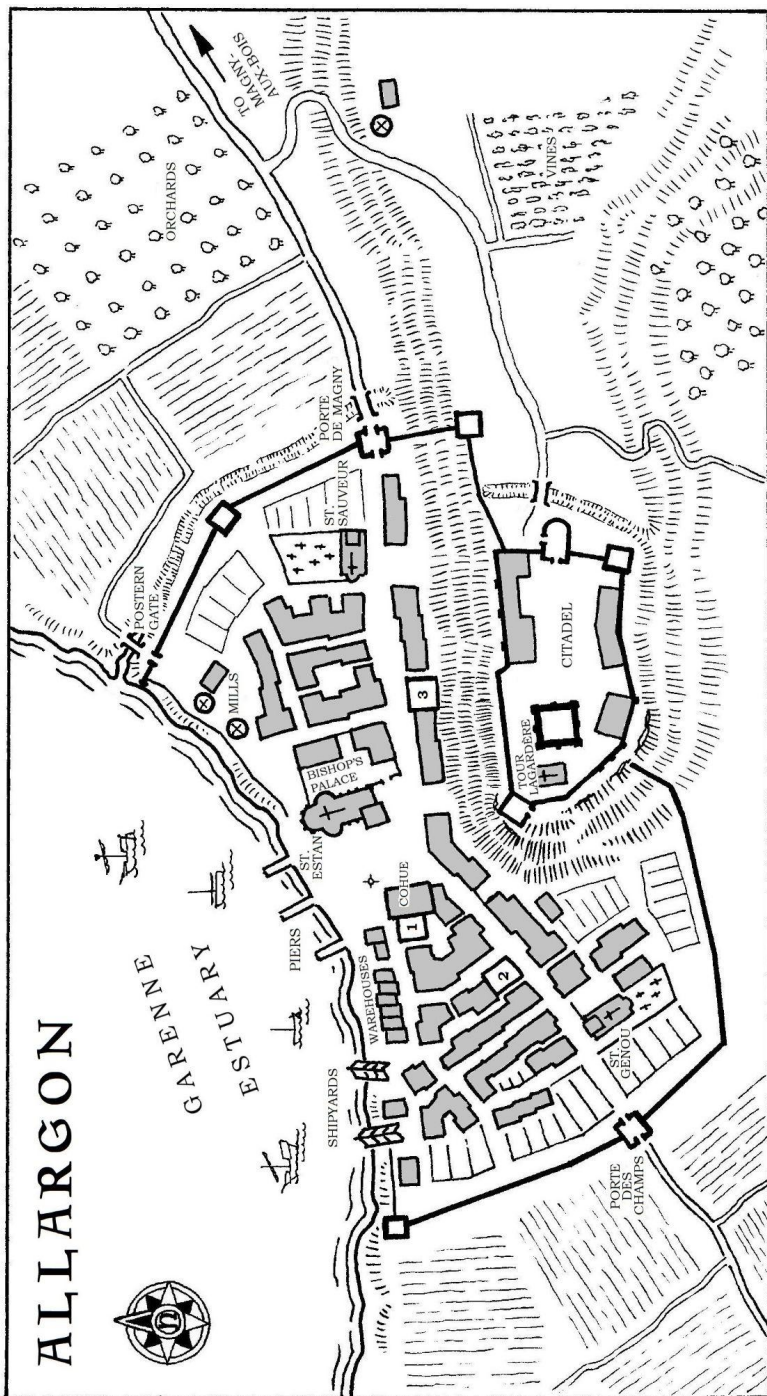
Bear: Attack 17, Defence 7, Claws (d8, 5), Magical Defence 3, Evasion 4, Health Points 2d6+20, AF 1, Rank Equivalent: 6 (see Bestiary, page 26)

Can the PCs stop the bear without killing it?

If they do, they will be treated to a bottle of fine Chaubrettan wine and a good quality meal by Guibert, the bear's trainer and owner. He travels widely and may be a good source of information or gossip.

If they kill the bear, the crowd will approve but they get nothing more than the experience points for the fight. Guibert will try to get the player characters to pay for the bear (1,000+ Deniers/Florins) and, if that fails, will try to get the “foreign riff-raff” arrested for killing his livelihood. (The town guards may be open to “negotiation”...)

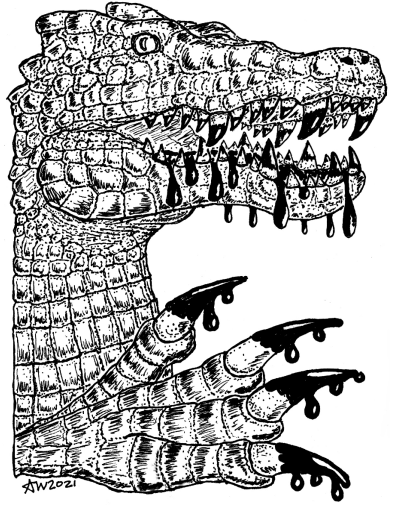
Note: if just wandering about town, will the PCs be in armour? What weapons will they have with them? Will they take time to run back and arm themselves? Will the bear have been dealt with by someone else if they do?



THE BLOOD FIEND

Andrew Wright

From out of the southern swamps the Blood Fiend⁵ staggers; a hulking humanoid brute covered in armoured scutes, with razor sharp claws and a toothsome crocodile-like head. Is it a highly-adapted archosaurian or merely an evolutionary dead-end cousin of the Dracomen? Scholarly conjecture is deeply divided on the issue. Regardless, lowering its snout to the ground to sniff for prey, the beast picks up a scent from a scarlet stain: fresh blood! The Blood Fiend shambles forth anew with great enthusiasm, ever-hungry and never satiated, always on the prowl for meat to tear asunder and flesh to rip to pieces. It knows no other way...



The Blood Fiend is a terror of the warmer, wetter equatorial lands; the swamps and jungles of Mungoda, the great delta of the River Isis, the mangroves that fringe both the Azure Coast and the shores that line the Gulf of Marazid. During the summer months it has also been known to venture north into the Coradian Sea. Certainly, the Blood Fiend has been recorded from the ruined coastal city of Thalios, while the wandering warrior-sage Xaxamedes asserted some number of the creatures likewise infest the Tombs of Kala on the isle of Kaxos. Recent rumours claim the beasts have also made a permanent home in Ferromaine, preying on lone unfortunates by the quayside in summer and hibernating in dank flooded cellars during the winter!

⁵ The Blood Fiend originally appeared in the Golden Dragon gamebook *The Eye of the Dragon* (1985, reprinted 2016) by Dave Morris.

As an eater of gore and carrion, the Blood Fiend is a capable tracker and ever alert to the telltale scents of both spilt blood and decaying flesh. The creature is thus capable of Tracking (see *Dragon Warriors*, p. 63), with a +2 bonus to all Perception related tracking rolls, owing to their superior sense of smell. In addition, if their prey is wounded and bleeding, the Blood Fiend may add an additional +2 bonus to the roll. Despite lacking a tail, Blood Fiends are capable swimmers using their powerful limbs and can even track bleeding prey through water, in much the same way as sharks do. When they come within range of their prey the Blood Fiend will lunge forward and attack in a frenzied rage; each round they have a 30% chance of snapping with their tooth-studded jaws rather than lashing out with clawed forelimbs.

Finally, a critical hit (i.e. a score of 1 on the d20 Hit Roll) counts as a hug attack, as the Blood Fiend grapples its victim and savagely mauls their flesh. The victim suffers 10 Health Points damage, armour notwithstanding.

The lair of a Blood Fiend will typically be a muddy hole in the river bank or a shallow fern-shaded cave, full of the old gnawed bones of those it has slaughtered, picked clean by the gluttonous creature. Much treasure can sometimes be found here, for the Blood Fiend has no use for trinkets, and lets anything inedible fall where it may.

Attack 18, bite (d6,6)

Defence 7

Armour Factor 4 (armoured scales)

Magical Defence 2

Evasion 2

Stealth 11

Perception 7 (normal)

Health Points 2d6+12

Movement 8m (16m)

Swimming 20m

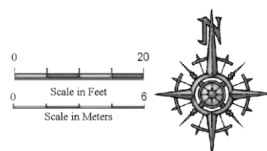
Rank Equivalent 4th

Category: monster; Number: 1-6; Habitat: underworlds, swamps, forests (jungle only), uncharted waters (coast only); Typical Treasure: moderate

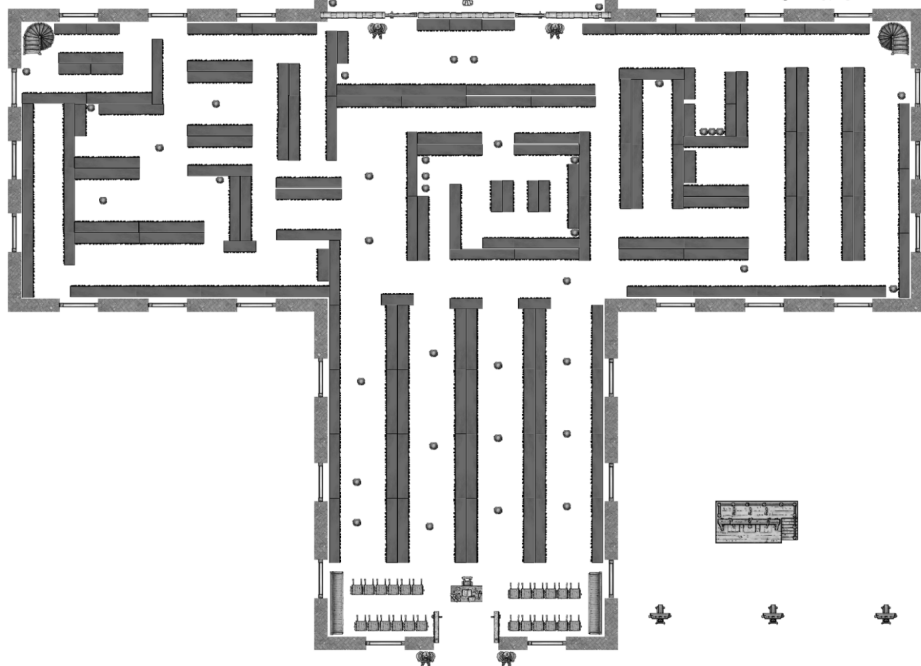


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